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Role for G.O.P. Moderates

Foreign Affairs

The Need to Calm Down Our Allies

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ASPEN, Colo. It is apparent from the public reaction of foreign newspapers and the private reaction of foreign governments that there is growing concern about the steadiness of U.S. leadership in the allied community. A succession of events since last November has distorted the image of steadfast American democracy upon whose nuclear strength, political judgment and diplomatic wisdom the Western comity depends.

The first cruel blow, of course, was the assassination of President Kennedy so immediately followed by his accused murderer's death. This twin crime led to vicious speculation about organized plots. The effect of such conjecture has not yet entirely been offset by the tranquil and efficient way in which our governing processes were handed on.

From a European viewpoint the nomination of Senator Goldwater and the overwhelming ascendancy of conservative Republican ideas served to renew doubts concerning the United States and its future policies. It can be argued that our elections are nobody's business but our own; yet this is no longer the complete truth. The NATO countries, which know that only this country can protect them in some ultimate crunch, have a legitimate interest in what kind of administration governs in Washington.

In the wake of other events disturbing to Europeans comes a wave of racial violence. It is difficult for most foreigners, above all on the Continent, to comprehend these sad occurrences, which often are reported in such a way as to resemble incipient civil war.

For all these reasons Washington is clearly worried about possible damage to our prestige as we prepare for a vigorous election campaign. The campaign itself may feature alarming charges and countercharges about foreign policy, and might well be accompanied by a counterpoint of civic disorders.

Therefore, personalities high in the Government are giving serious thought to efforts to calm opinion in certain allied lands. There has been private talk of encouraging distinguished Republican moderates, who do not sympathize with Senator Goldwater's more extreme views, to travel overseas during coming weeks and explain American realities and the underlying constancy of our national position.

Nothing formal can be done along these lines. It would be embarrassing to both Democrats and Republicans to join in any such bipartisan venture in the middle of a heated campaign. Nevertheless, the idea has been quietly discussed and something will probably be done.

Obviously, any Republicans who might lend themselves to such a project in the national interest must be well known abroad. One such man is John McCloy, who is highly respected in Europe, especially in West Germany, where he served as U.S. Ambassador. McCloy is a member of the commission appointed by the President to investigate the Dallas assassinations. It is thought likely that once its report has been issued he may be free to travel and perhaps make speeches.

The mere fact that he is on the Presidential commission of inquiry, which is expected to lay the ghost of any suspicion Mr. Kennedy was killed by organized conspiracy, should give particular value to reassurances he may give European audiences this summer. There has also been talk of suggesting to other Republicans not engaged in partisan campaigning, men like Allen Dulles, that they could perform a useful service by talking to allied statesmen as well as possibly larger audiences.

The need, it is agreed, is to stress American responsibility in both attitudes and actions and to point out that this is a continuing responsibility, unaffected by the heat of political debate, by crime or accident, or by the convulsions of a changing multiracial society. The argument favoring immediate efforts to explain such continuity is to diminish temporary alarms that may be felt abroad between now and November.

Clearly, no spokesman of either party can ask any foreigner, friendly or unfriendly, to dismiss our ugly race riot or to ignore the implications of trigger-happy statements of intended policy now being made by some of the more ardent Goldwaterites.

Nevertheless, some of the uneasiness, tinged with mistrust, now rampant abroad can surely be allayed on a bipartisan basis, with responsible and distinguished Republicans playing the lead role.

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